

## Southern Appalachian Creature Feature Podcasts

### National Climatic Data Center provides vital information

Greetings and welcome to the Southern Appalachian Creature Feature.

In a massive basement in downtown Asheville, millions of sheets of paper are shelved, row upon row, upon row – a place not unlike the warehouse where the Ark of the Covenant is stored in Raiders of the Lost Ark. However, instead of religious artifacts, these shelves contain centuries of weather data ranging from weather reports recorded at frontier forts, to Pacific weather data collected during World War Two to sheets filled out and submitted by farmers across America.

The basement is a repository for the National Climatic Data Center, a branch of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency responsible for maintaining the nation's weather records. In addition to the old paper records, the center maintains a constantly growing store of electronic data, including information coming in from weather satellites. The Asheville facility is one of two in the nation and maintains the data collected by instrumentation or first-person observation. A sister center in Boulder, Colorado maintains records of pre-historic climate and weather, collected from ice cores, tree rings and other natural indicators.

This resource is already used by researchers and even a professional sports team, but as the nation, from the military to natural resource managers here in the Southern Appalachians, begins to grapple more and more with adapting to climate change, this vast repository of climate data will become an increasingly important tool.

For WNCW and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, this is Gary Peebles.